St Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 MI Middle East
Bedouin M34



where wells are somewhat close together and the for-
age of the country allows it, goats can be kept, but these
must be watered at least once a day. They furnish hair
for tent-cloth, and thus it is the goat that shelters the
Bedouin from the elements. In districts where forage
and water are still more abundant, sheep are raised,
chiefly for their wool or as articles of export. Mutton is
the favorite meat all over Arabia, and although for a les-
ser occasion goats or camels may answer, when a great
sheikh gives a feast, sheep are the animals slaughtered.

Much has been written, and justly, about the beauty
and the endurance of Arabian horses, but they are not an
economic asset. In Central Arabia a horse is a pure lux-
ury. Often in summer they must live on camel's milk
just as humans do. They are kept and treated as house-
hold pets and are very intelligent and affectionate. Their
only function is to furnish an aristocratic mount for
pleasure, for state occasions and for war. During part
of the year there is abundant pasturage for them, but
they are a luxury afforded only by the sheikhs and the
very rich and their number is small.

There are years in Arabia when the spring rains fail
partially or completely, and then the animals die by thou-
sands, or are driven to the nearest town to be sold for a
song. In such years starvation stalks abroad through the
land. Little children die because there is no food suit-
able for such tender stomachs, and the adults are even
more gaunt and thin than usual. The sheikhs are nearly
bankrupted by the number of poor they have to feed,
and the whole community waits and prays for more rain
the coming spring.

At the best the life of a desert Bedouin is one of a
poverty so bitter and deep that Westerners have little idea
of it. The entire outfit of a family could be bought for a
mere trifle.

BEDOUINS MJ4

slumped from LP 20 before the First World War to LP 4-5 or even less in the thirties.[1] 233 178

> 'Prior to the war there were good markets for Iraq's camels in Syria, Turkey and Persia, in addition to the large numbers required for transport purposes in Iraq itself. Since the war, many railways have been constructed throughout the Middle East and the road systems of all countries have been greatly extended and improved. These roads are now all served by a large and increasing number of motor cars and lorries which have to a great extent taken the place of camel transport, thus practically removing the income to the Bedouins from their sale of camels.' [2] 233 178 439

There was in the past a substantial demand for camel's meat, particularly in Egypt. But figures show that the import of camels into Egypt declined sharply since the end of the First World War. The import of camels into Egypt averaged prior to World War I (1909-1913) [3] 11 137 per year, in the post-war years up till 1937 only 26 137. Figures and statements of observers indicate that the Egyptian camel market has contracted considerably since the end of the First World War. Although there has recently been a rise in consumption of camel's meat in Egypt,[4] the camel industry has lost its importance.

A classic Bedouin country such as Transjordan exported in 1929

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1. Statistik, 1937, February
2. Special Report, 1938, p. 185
3. Statistik, 1939, p. 177
4. The number of camels slaughtered in public slaughtering houses amounted to:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 13 082 | in | 1944 |
| 23 128 | | 1945 |
| 27 258 | | 1948 |

cf. Annuaire, 1947, p. 137

233 178 439

only 3 437 camels,[1] and within a short time this trade became so insignificant that since 1937 camel export figures were no longer listed in official statistical abstracts. Although 40 000 nomads of Transjordan are classified as full Bedouin, they cannot possibly live on camel-breeding. The following figures will show the dwindling camel stock in Transjordan:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1927 | 13 800 | 2) |
| 1929 | 33 500 | 2) |
| 1935 | 3 400 | 2) |
| 1943 | 6 000 | 2) |
| 1948 | 2 500 | 3) |

Figures are probably understated as information on camel holdings was furnished for taxing purposes, but they indicate the trend.

The decline of camel trade and the slump in market prices have severely hit the camel-breeding Bedouin. Transjordan was selected as an example, but the same phenomenon is apparent among the nomads of Syria and Iraq.

Changes within the nomadic economy

361 178 166

The camel Bedouin coming from the Arabian desert into the lands of the Fertile Crescent will sooner or later become a sheep nomad. This transformation has been going on for centuries, long before the decline of the camel market made it necessary. The change was in the past an adaptation of the pastoral economy to

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1. Epstein, 1935, p. 180
2. International Yearbooks of Agricultural Statistics for 1938/9 and 1940/41
3. Final Report, 1948, Part II, p. 10

68: Neubert S-4 (no date) 1952 M1 Middle East
BEDOUINS MJ4
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the natural conditions of the environment, while in recent years it has also been an adjustment to economic circumstances.

The type of animal industry is determined by geographic factors and climatic conditions. In Iran "in many parts of the alluvial lowlands, terrain is too soft and swampy, so that those animals (camels) are few outside the steppes."[1] Syria, especially the northern part, where rigorous winters frequently occur, is not an ideal region for camel-breeding while in parts of the Arabian desert sheep and goats cannot survive.

The profitability and the increase of sheep and goat rearing is apparent from the following Transjordan export-trade figures:[2]

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| | 1937 | 1939 | 1941 | 1943 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| goats | 6 988 | 7 437 | 32 638 | 31 041 |
| sheep | 13 044 | 37 896 | 54 735 | 52 487 |

While the camel trade declined, the sheep and goat business has been constantly rising.

Mr. Spurgin states[3] that sheep raising is more lucrative than practiced in permanent settlements which do not have to face losses incurred as result of intermittent raiding. With the establishment of Public Security, however, raids have practically ceased, and the desert has been made secure. Today, throughout the area the animal industry is largely in the hands of the nomads.[4]

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1. Fisher, 1952, p. 362
2. Hatheily, 1946, p. 112 Table 16
3. Spurgin, 1938, p. 228
4. In Iran the breeding of sheep is practiced almost exclusively by the nomadic population, cf. Royal Institute, 1950, p. 259

361 The pastoral people are fulfilling an important economic function
433 by:

a. supplying the home markets with essential products, and

b. furnishing valuable export articles.

237 Iraqi wool is considered of good quality and finds a ready market
439 in the United States of America and in continental Europe for carpet manufacture.[1] In 1947 Iraq exported 2754 tons of wool at I D 372 349.[2] In 1948 and again in 1949 the wool export was about three times that of 1947.[3] Syria exports products like wool, butter, hides, etc.

233 The following statements will illustrate the valuable contri-
361 bution which the nomads are making to the general economy:
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"The Bedouin are experts in the breeding of livestock and form a class who afford a valuable contribution to the economic life of Transjordan." 4) "Their (Bedouin of Iraq) occupation of raising livestock is vital to the economy of the country." 5) "Syria cannot afford to lose the meat, milk and wool which are derived from the harvesting of the desert herbage." 6)

Thus in all the countries of the Fertile Crescent, livestock breeding, the primary occupation of the nomad population, appears to be an essential and lucrative industry.

1. Gamble, 1949, p. 30
2. Ibid, p. 13
3. Data Book, 1952, p. 40
4. Bayard, 1938, p. 318
5. Jarvis, 1945, p. 7
6. Report of the United States-Syrian Agricultural Mission, 1947, p. 23

A Durham G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MS I Kuwait



Add to the above the Zuluiziyah, a Zubair sheep tribe, and the Zaabu and Rufa'at, who are of Shammar origin, both of whom in good years join up with the Muntafiq shepherds and move southwards with them, and you have a fairly complete list of the Euphrates Shawiyah lying east of Samawa.

These tribes, though they move about on donkeys, which are more suitable beasts of burden for men owning slowly moving flocks of sheep, are in no way to be confused with the low-class Sukkâka fraternity, which are found all over Middle and North Arabia. The latter are the outcasts of the Peninsula, while the shepherd tribes are for the most part of good Arab stock, and some can give and take women from the best tribes of Iraq.

The shepherd tribes are all Shi'ah by persuasion and so are not much liked by the pure-blooded Badawin of the high desert. Nevertheless, they are tolerated and even welcomed by the latter each year, since they bring with them cheap mutton, excellent *dehen* (clarified butter), much wool for tents and red and white sheepskins, always in demand for camel saddle-coverings.

With each annual rainy season the shepherd tribes move south into the gravelly desert some 100 miles or more from the Euphrates. They divide into two waves when they reach the Bâtin valley, one wave moving down through Kuwait state into the Kuwait Neutral Zone and beyond,* and the other going down as far south as the Tawîl al Dhafir and Tawîl al Mutair, to scatter over the Al Hajara region, which speaking roughly lies along both sides of the Iraq-Sa'udi Arabia frontier line.

Speaking generally, but this is not an invariable rule, the Zaabu-Bani Salama, Ghumr, Budur, Ghazalat and Zaiyad tribes keep to the west of the Bâtin while the Shawâlis, Jumrân, Bani Malik, Alfan Salah and 'Azzazma pass through Kuwait and south along the coast of the Persian Gulf.

The best of the shepherd tribes from a fighting point of view are perhaps the Budur, the Jumrân and the Ghumr, whose Shaikhs Shirdah al Salma, Nasir al Gubaih (son of the more famous Hamûd al Gubaih of Great War days) and Mazhaal al Halaiyih I count among some of my oldest friends of the southern desert. I had many a political

* In bad years the southern limit is Jahrah on the land of the Bay of Kuwait.

494 492 way back to their tents. No one ever molests them, and it would go hard with a mere man who attempted to interfere with a bevy of these tribal lasses on the march.

Hukra tents are not pitched close together, but in ones and twos, 361 233 each in sight of a neighbour. This enables one tent dweller to come to the assistance of his neighbours all round him if necessary. The result is that large areas of desert country are dotted as far as the eye can see with little specks of two or three or even one black tent. The above method of scattering widely is in vogue only if peace reigns in the land. It is healthy, sheep are not crowded together, and grazing is systematically gone over.

[013] Were there to be war, or even a *rumour* of war in the air, the shepherd tribes would either concentrate closer together by day and night, or make for home again.

221 233 The return to Iraq of the shepherd tribes takes place usually about the end of April or early in *May* when water becomes scarce and sheep have to get back to the Euphrates before the desert grazing dries up.

• 439 Just as they have made wool, butter, milk, mutton, etc., cheap in Kuwait, so with the money realised they take home rice, sugar, coffee, clothes for their women and girls, and presents for those who stayed behind. Their return home, therefore, though bad for Kuwait, is a joyous one for their relatives on the Euphrates.

615 618 431 To ensure good treatment for themselves in Kuwait and Ne'ufi Arabia, the Hukra pay *khuliiah* we *munlah*, consisting of gifts of young lambs, to the local Governor or Ruler, and they also pay *gabbi* voluntarily, if unrest is in the air and they want to receive welcome protection from possible raiders. The Ne'ufi Government officials are keen in the enforcement of *gabbi*, but the Shaikh of Kuwait, whose state derives benefit from the Iraq shepherds, always waives his right to it.

736 Kuwait is definitely the person for the annual departure of the Hukra, and their return the following year is always looked forward to by the majority of the people. Not the least to be missed are the merry laughing faces of these daughters of the Mountain on the Jahrah-Kuwait road, who joke with everybody and miss no opportunity of displaying pretty eyes and dainty cotton-covered chins and